

Piloting NAP Implementation in Sierra Leone

SAG Bulletin, February 2025



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BACKGROUND TO THE REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP

As part of GIZ's (the German Corporation for International Cooperation) program on Regional Resource Governance in West Africa, GIZ has partnered with Pact on the project Piloting NAP Implementation in Sierra Leone, financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Union. The project aims to help the Government of Sierra Leone in implementing its National Action Plan (NAP) for reducing mercury use and improving the governance of Sierra Leone's artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) sector, including formal gold trading and exporting. The project supports Sierra Leone, with a specific focus on Tonkolili district. Following advice from the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources, Pact and GIZ have established a Regional Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) as a platform for engaging key national and regional government institutions, local authorities, civil society organizations (CSOs), gold miners, traders, and other stakeholders.

The SAG has three main objectives:

1. To provide timely information and advice to the project.
2. To ensure that the project is aligned with stakeholders' evolving priorities, effectively benefits identified groups, and achievements are sustained and scaled.
3. To serve as a multi-stakeholder platform for coordinating ASGM formalization and regulation initiatives beyond the project.

This Bulletin highlights the project's progress made since November 2024.

TRAININGS BY 'COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS'

As part of Pact's sustainability strategy, the project's four multi-day training series has adopted a 'Training of Trainers' approach where Community Champions in all four ASGM communities were coached and provided materials to replicate trainings.

From February 7-8, 2025, Community Champions in Bolaneh, Masumbiri, Mamankie, and Rosent community organized the first such training, passionately discussing issues such as mining regulations, mercury-free mining, and gender equality. Pact's project team participated in this first training to provide technical back-up, but it soon became clear that this was not required because the Community Champions mastered all subjects.



Community Champion training in Mamankie community.

SIXTH SAG MEETING ON FEBRUARY 12, 2025

On February 12, 2025, Pact and GIZ organized SAG's 6th meeting at the Tonkolili District Council in Magboraka. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Tholley, Paramount Chief of Kafe Chiefdom. The meeting was well attended with 52 participants, including 17 women, representing all SAG members. This included government agencies from Freetown and the region – especially NMA and EPA – as well as local and traditional authorities, including Paramount Chiefs from Kafe and Town Chief from Taneh chiefdom, and the Tonkolili District Council. ASGM associations from Bolaneh, Masumbiri, Rosent, and Mamankie were also present, while civil society was represented by Women in Mining and Network Movement for Justice and Development. For the first time in the project's SAG meetings, financial institutions, specifically Access Bank and Guarantee Trust Bank, also participated. Finally, gold dealers and exporters, including the Gold Dealers and Exporters association (GDEA), and a representative from FINIC (a Freetown-based equipment manufacturer) were also present.

During the meeting, project partners shared testimonies reflecting on the project's impact in their communities. The Secretary-General of the Rosent Gold Miners and Traders Association (RMTA) shared:

“Pact has helped us understand about the important roles of women in mining and not to use violence or marginalize women and children [...] in any forms of mining.”

After this, discussions focused on a ‘Sustainability Plan’ that Pact developed after SAG members recommendation in the previous SAG meeting in November 2024. The plan outlines the key achievements of the project and suggests actions that specific SAG members can undertake on a specified timeline to ensure that progress continues to be made after the current project phase ends on March 31, 2025, ensuring impacts are sustained and scaled. For example, the plan suggests that Community Champions continue to replicate training on mining regulations, mercury reduction, safety, business management, gender equality, and environmental protection on a biannual basis. To ensure monitoring and follow-up on the plan's implementation, it also includes a commitment by GIZ to organize two additional SAG meetings later in 2025 to collectively review the plan's implementation and discuss any issues.

During the meeting, Pact also facilitated a discussion between financial institutions and ASGM miners about access to finance. Representatives from Access Bank and Guarantee Trust Bank presented the options, requirements, and processes that formalized ASGM associations should follow in applying for finance. Members of various ASGM associations asked probing questions about issues such as interest rates and collateral, challenging the banks to adapt their financial products to the unique characteristics of ASGM.

Finally, access to formal markets was discussed. Following Pact's efforts to link gold dealers and exporters with ASGM associations, GDEA's Secretary General outlined the gold dealer's envisioned business partnership for miners, which includes pre-financing, provision of protective and mining equipment, and more.



A representative from Access Bank explains the bank's financial products to miners during the SAG meeting.

SUMMARY OF PHASE 2 ACHIEVEMENTS

Phase 2 Results (November 2023 – February 2025)	
✓ Registered three new associations – Masumbir’s MMTA, Rosent’s RMTA, and Mamankie’s MMTU – with the Tonkolili District Council.	✓ Installed new mercury-free equipment (a disk mill, a new forge, and cupellation equipment) in Bolaneh, and trained BMTA members on its use.
✓ Renewed BMTA’s artisanal mining licenses and obtained RMTA’s license .	✓ Conducted mercury-free mining and OHS refresher trainings with 55 BMTA members (24 women) and handed over PPE to all four associations.
✓ Expanded the SAG to include more regional stakeholders .	✓ Conducted two mercury-free demonstrations in Bolaneh and Masumbiri.
✓ Trained 291 stakeholders , including 117 women (40%), on mercury-free mining, Mines and Mineral Development Act 2023, EPA Act 2022, OHS, business management, and due diligence.	✓ Developed BMTA’s Responsible Mine Business Plan and CRAFT Report , evaluating and mitigating key legal, financial, environmental, safety, and human rights risks.
✓ Supported Community Champions in replicating trainings among 233 gold miners and traders , including 91 women (39%).	✓ Established, trained, and registered Sierra Leone’s first responsible gold trading & exporting association , GDEA.
✓ Developed and shared a Responsible Business Mine Plan Template among stakeholders.	✓ Developed and validated the project’s Sustainability Plan .

NEXT STEPS FOR SUSTAINABILITY (PACT AND GIZ)

- Monitor and support ASGM associations and other SAG members in implementing the project’s Sustainability Plan.
- Monitor the business partnership between gold buyers (especially GDEA) and the project’s established ASGM associations to explore mutually beneficial gold trading arrangements.
- Organize the next Re-SAG meeting in May or June 2025 with the objective of collectively evaluating the Sustainability Plan’s implementation and encouraging stakeholders to take ownership of the process. (GIZ-ReGo lead)
- Monitor the Community Champions in replicating training activities in their community between April to December 2025.
- Explore the development of Piloting NAP Implementation Phase 3, in consultation with SAG members and other stakeholders.